

STORY OF

ATARI™ YARS' REVENGE

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KSR-943



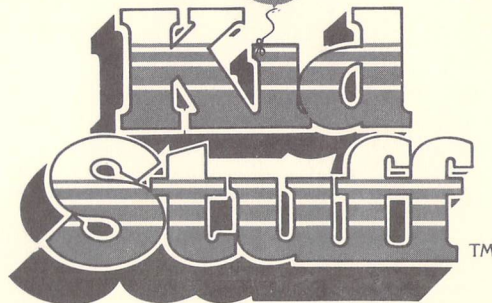
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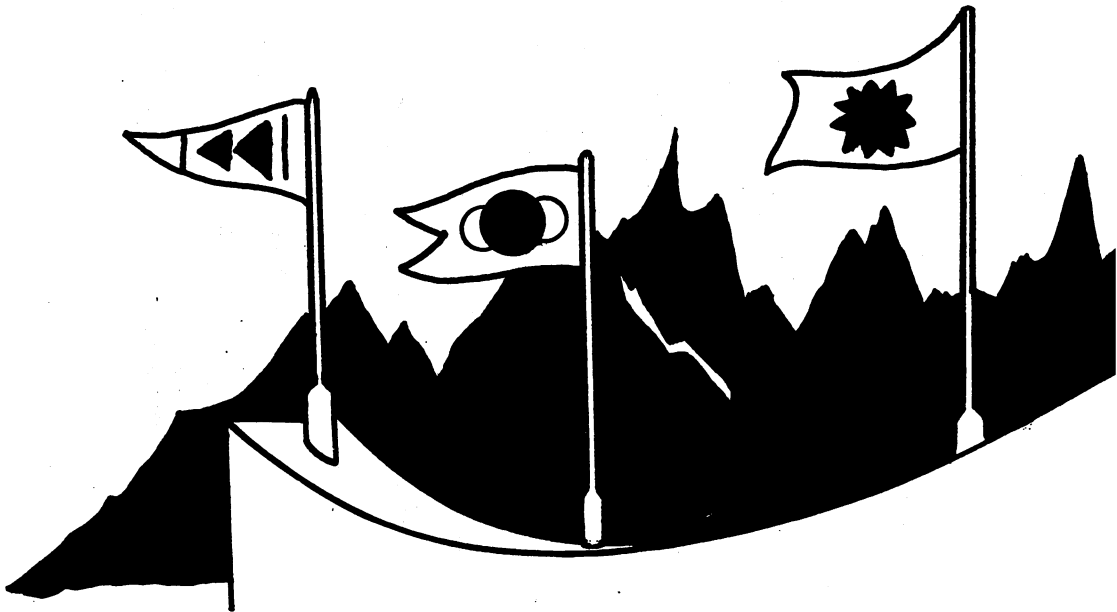
Story of YARS' REVENGE

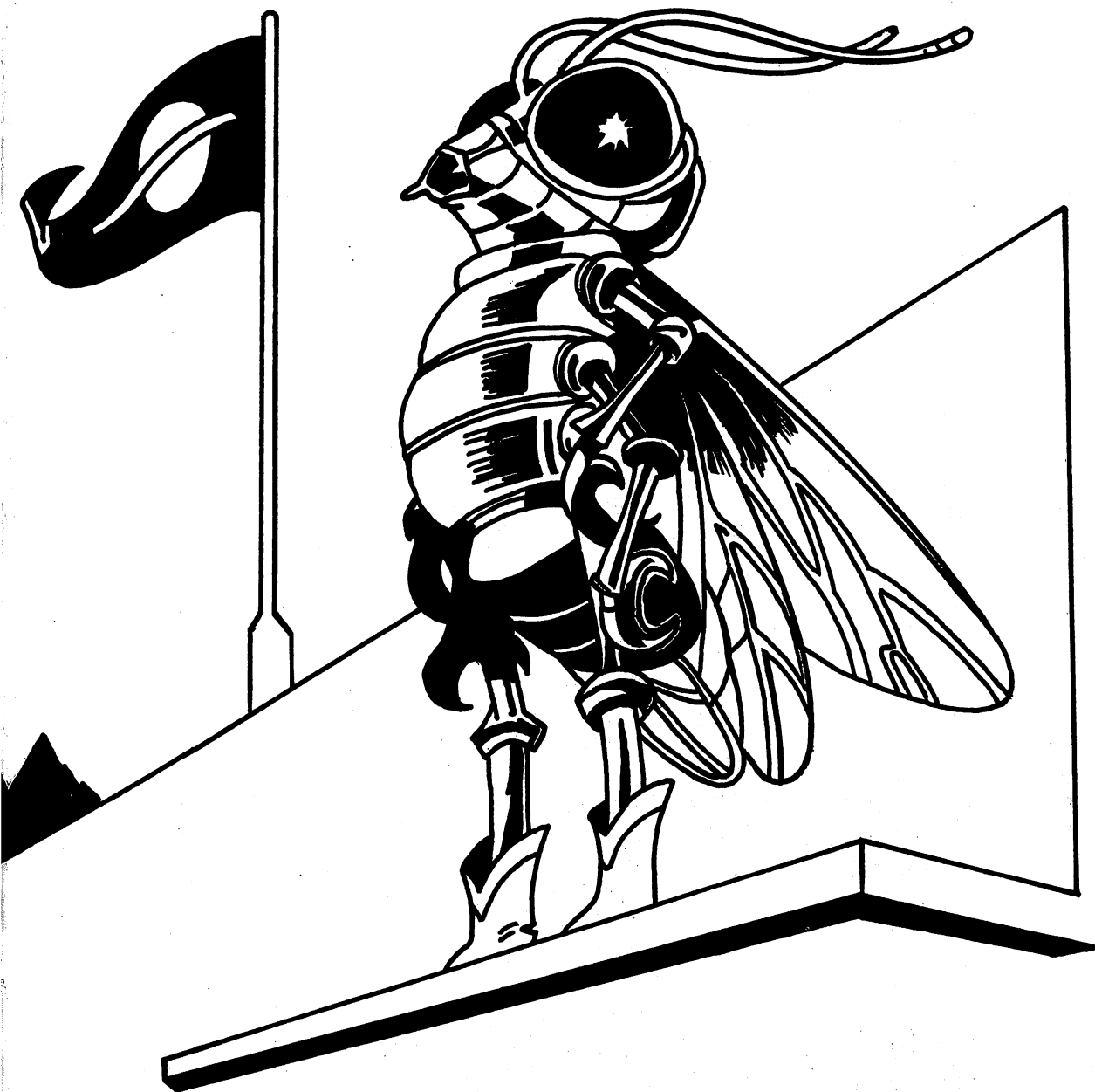
This is your ATARI YARS' REVENGE Read-Along Book. Every time you hear this sound . . . , it means it's time to turn the page. Now we are ready to begin. Open your book and we will start our story and remember, when you hear the sound, turn the page.



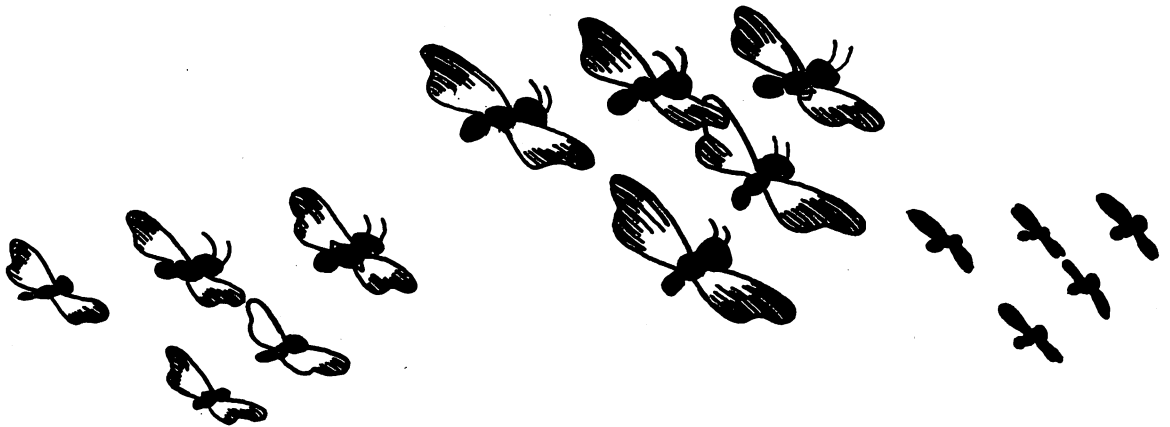
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There was a lump in my throat and a tightness across my chest, standing up there on the platform and looking out at all those faces. The Yar Defense Forces Band was playing the anthem and the flags of all the remaining planets of the Razak Solar System Confederation were snapping in a stiff breeze. The crowd was absolutely, respectfully still. I felt honored to have been able to serve my people for so long, because many apply, but few are chosen; even back in the 'beginning, when the situation was much more desperate than it is today. I was proud to be a Yar. I was proud to have been a Yar warrior. The anthem ended and I allowed myself to stretch my old, stiff wings a bit, though I remained standing at attention.



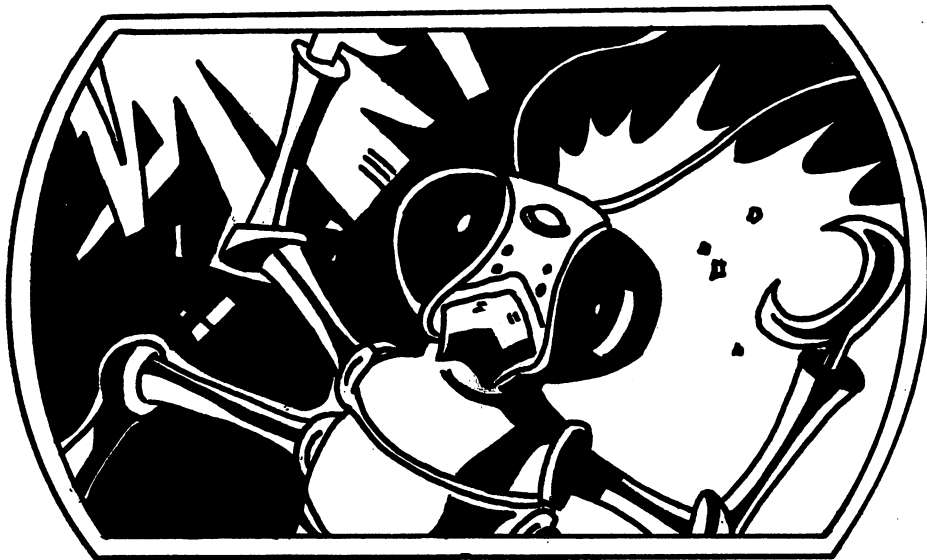


Everyone's head turned at the approaching sound. It was just a distant whirring at first, buzzing louder and closer, building into an overwhelming drone as the massed squadrons of Yar warriors roared out of the amber, crystal mist of the distant horizon and thundered overhead. Yar scouts dived over the plain beyond, and the ground shook from the firepower display of their energy missiles.

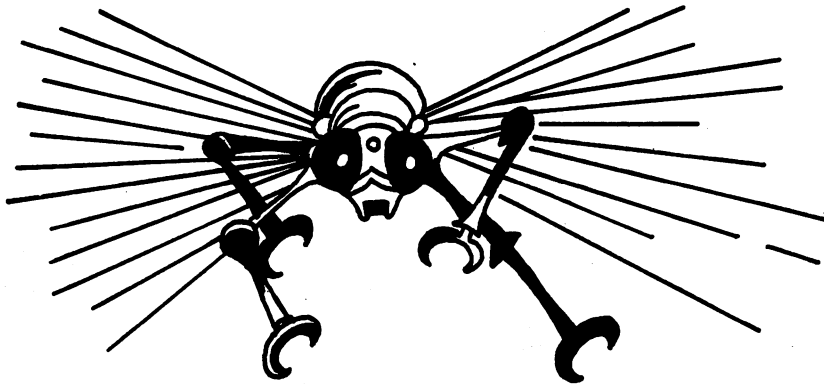


It was impressive. And it made you reflect back to a time before all this was necessary. To a time when harmony reigned across the Razak Solar System and we were at peace with the universe. Before the evil Qotile, in an unprovoked and vicious attack, destroyed our Planet IV and created the need for total and complete revenge in our hearts.

I remember, it was a day like any other. I was a young Yar. The second sun had set for the fourth time and we had just finished dinner. My family gathered around the visual communication screen to visit with my uncle, like we always did. He was a scientist at the weapons research complex on Planet IV. He was overseeing completion of the target location system for the new, invisible Zorlon cannon, so it would be ready for our defense. It was the price of peace, the elders said. It was the only way to, keep the darker forces at bay. When we locked in the VCS, my uncle's lab was crashing down around him. Wave upon wave of Qotile destroyer missiles were raining down on Planet IV. My uncle tried to speak in those last moments, but the explosions were too great. Then the screen went black and the disconnect signal filled the room.

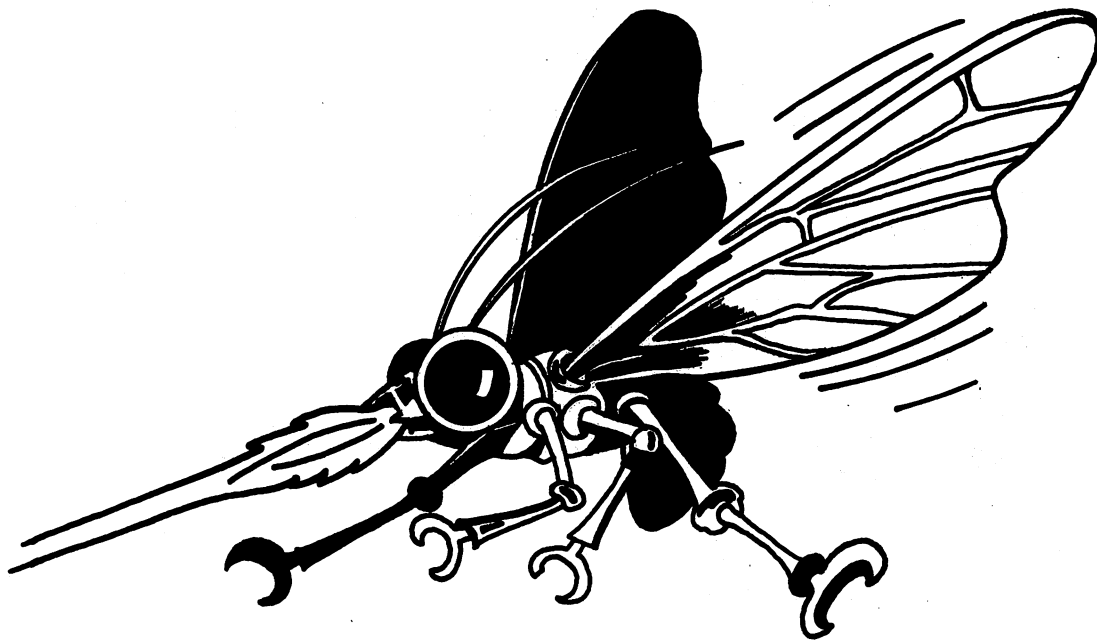


The next day, the call went out for all young, able-bodied Yars to report to the armament center for induction into the Yar Defense Forces. I went, together with my best friend, Kral. I was accepted and Kral was rejected. He had weak, unsynchronized wings and was myopic in at least eight facets in both eyes. He was heartbroken, then angry, then desperate. The medical technician was unmoved by his pleas, so Kral revved up his wingbeat to show them they were wrong.



The trouble was, one wing was going faster than the other one. Kral yelled for everybody to stand back, he was taking off. I tried to warn him about a wall up ahead, but he wouldn't listen. He took off sideways and never saw the wall until he hit it. Kral had tears in his eyes and was still arguing, when they marched the rest of us away to our training squadrons.

Basic training was tough. My wings had never been so tired. From first light until the last set of the second sun, we flew; day in and day out, one-on-one aerial combat, close order formations, and evasive maneuvers. It was thorough. And we grew stronger and got better. We had to, because we knew we were going to need all our flying skills. The Qotile were a formidable enemy. Then there were the live fire exercises. All Yars know, of course, we have the ability to eat and convert any substance into energy missiles. Though it's a power we never develop unless you're in the military or construction. Sometimes, as teenagers, we'd fool around with low level stuff as a prank. But the first time you convert and fire for real, vaporizing a target, you know what omnipotence feels like.



When I got home on leave, before combat assignment, Kral was waiting for me. He wanted to show me something and dragged me out to the edge of the plain. There was nothing around except an old storage shed. Kral was excited and told me he'd been training on his own. When I asked him what for, he just looked at me like I was simpleminded and answered, "combat!" And without another word, he revved up and took off.



He did some pretty dangerous flying, and his wings were working a lot better. Of course, there wasn't much for him to run into out there. Then he climbed high, rolled over, and dove directly at the shed. Down and down and down, he came. I closed my eyes. Finally, he saw the shed and let go with a missile. He landed, scorched but happy. We both laughed, and took off before someone discovered their shed had been vaporized.

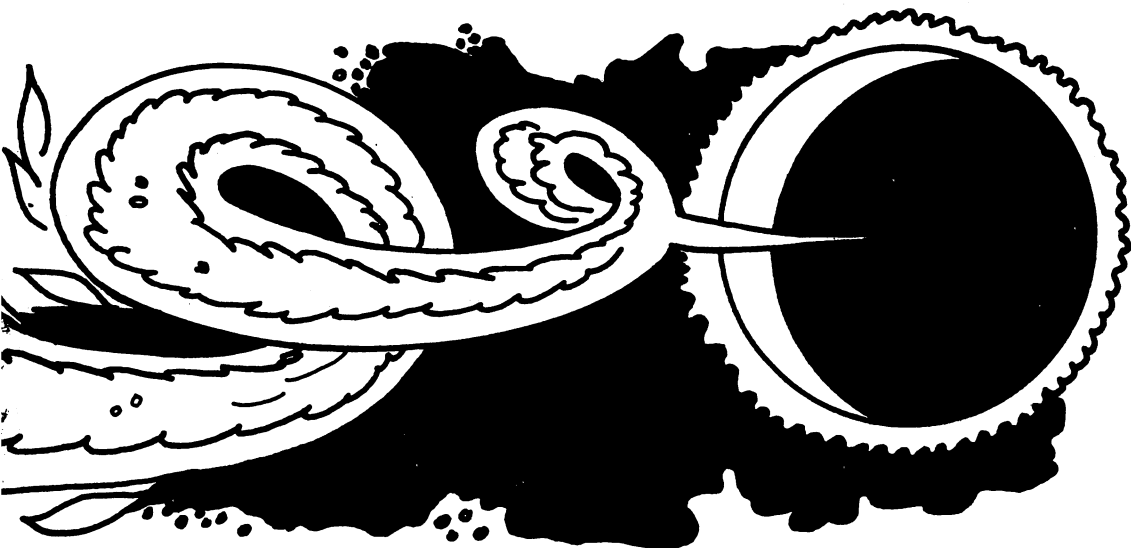


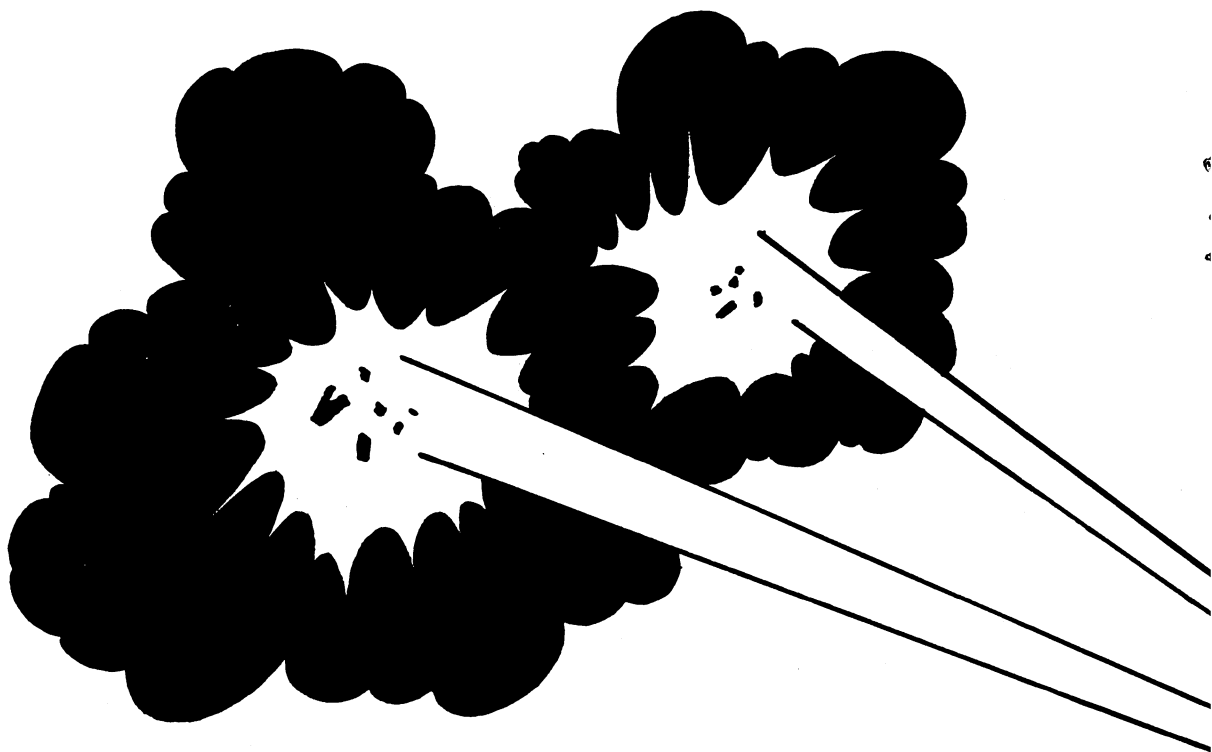
It was a crazy thing to do, but Kral was my friend and he'd worked hard. No one noticed the extra name added to the squadron scout roster. So Kral was outfitted with the target zeroing activator, along with me and the other Yar warriors.

Since the target location system for the Zorlon cannon was lost with Planet IV, Yar scouts were going to direct the cannon using our own bodies. At our home base, the cannon would line up on us and fire. Then we had to quickly get out of its path, or we would be destroyed instead of the Qotile. To charge the activator, we had to eat cosmic cells from the energy shield surrounding the Qotile base. Fortunately, none of us had yet seen an incoming round from the Zorlon cannon, or we might have quit right there. Instead, at first light, one by one, the squadron took off for the neutral zone.



The neutral zone was the radioactive cloud left after the destruction of Planet IV. It was sad to think about what a beautiful planet it had been. Now, what was left offered us only partial protection from the Qotile, as we waited to attack. We were safe from the Qotile destroyer missiles inside the zone, but were still vulnerable to their deadly, massive swirls. The radioactivity also cut off communication to our base, once we entered the zone. I was nervous and Kral was jumpy, too. We could see the Qotile base on the Eppian moon, on the far side of the neutral zone. It lay behind its constantly shifting, red shield. Everything was tense and quiet until the swirl struck, suddenly, with a roar of energy, and the first Yar warrior screamed his last.





The order to attack came from the squadron leader. Kral and I moved out with the others. We were in the second wave. I watched as the first Yar scout increased his wing angle and dove at the Qotile energy shield. He was unswerving, delivering three missiles in rapid succession. He was followed by another scout, and another. Each attack driving a larger hole into the shield.

The Qotile, taken by surprise at first by the sudden ferocity of the attack, sent up a wave of destroyer missiles. Two attacking scouts were vaporized in a flash. Dodging destroyer missiles, a scout from our wave managed to charge his zeroing activator, but was destroyed by a swirl before he could line up for the Zorlon cannon. Then the order came for a diversionary attack, and two volunteers to attempt a line up of the Zorlon cannon, again.

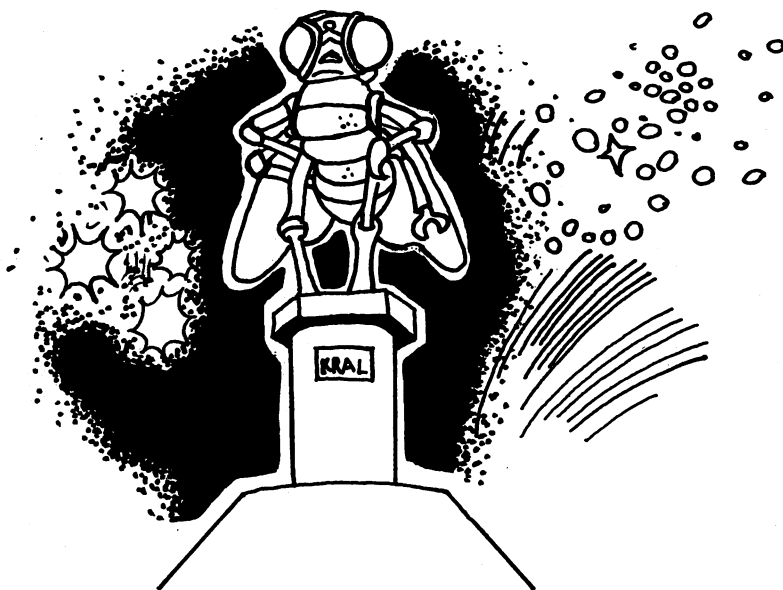


Kral could never keep his mouth shut. And as the rest of the squadron and Qotile battled in a hail of missiles and swirls, we set out. I led and Kral followed. I opened the hole even more, with an energy missile blast. Then before I could stop him, yelling about getting closer, Kral plunged through the hole and dove directly at the Qotile fort! But he'd forgotten to eat any cosmic cells! His activator was dead! Kral didn't see the Qotile until the last second. He and the Qotile were equally surprised. Kral reversed wingbeat, the Qotile tried to become a swirl, they touched for a moment, and the activator charged! The powerful fireball from the Zorlon cannon raced across space and Kral darted aside, as he was supposed to do, when he realized what had happened. The fireball struck the Qotile! But the force of the explosion set off a group of destroyer missiles! The blast was gigantic, taking half the fort, and Kral.





I could still remember the force of that explosion, even though it was those many years ago. Then the sound of the First Elder of the Confederation introducing me, dragged me back to the platform, the ceremony, and the present. As former Supreme Commander of the Yar Defense Forces, Attack General Lotar, retired, it had fallen to me to unveil the first war memorial in Yar history. But it was time, and it was appropriate. For it honored my friend and fellow warrior, Kral, credited with exceptional bravery and discovery of the most accurate method of targeting the Zorlon cannon. In the distance, a Zorlon cannon fireball charged into space in salute, as I pulled the cloth aside. My eyes filled with tears, but I was smiling. Maybe if he'd been able to see better, he'd be here with me today, instead of this statue.



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